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ABSTRACT

Based on the experiences of the Center for Community Education in Clay County, Florida, this handbook is intended to show how to integrate the needs of exceptional adults and the services designed for handicapped persons by including individuals in the planning process through their presence on advisory councils. Following an introduction that offers background information about community education and a rationale for including handicapped persons on the advisory councils for community education programs, the guide contains seven sections. The first section presents an outline of the handbook, with the guide's information summarized in detail. The second section suggests methods for recruiting advisory council members, while the third section reminds those responsible for recruiting handicapped board members to beware of architectural barriers to their services. The next three sections provide practical tips for setting up the advisory structure and conducting meetings as well as suggest model by-laws for advisory boards. The final section describes the IDEA Council System Model, used in the Clay County Center for Community Education, as an example of how to implement the handbook's suggestions in an educational program for exceptional adults. The model includes a flow chart of the system and a sample questionnaire for blind and visually impaired adults. (KC)

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EXCEPTIONAL ADULT

ADVISORY COUNCIL HANDBOOK

"Awareness Through Education"

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Prepared by

Michael Taylor & Jay J. Alligood

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FOREWARD

Funding for the developement of this handbook has been provided by the Department of Education, Adult and Community Education Section, Special Demonstration, and Teacher Training Project, Section 310. A twenty-two member Clay County Exceptional Adult Educational Advisory Council was established to assist in developing this handbook which also served as a test group for determining those policies, procedures and resources which best facilitate the operation of an exceptional adult advisory council. Representatives from other agencies serving exceptionalities, exceptional adults, and other interested citizens also provided invaluable assistance in the development process.

Michael E. Taylor, Coordinator

Jay J. Alligood, Director

INTRODUCTION

Community Education is frequently defined as the process of bringing together the resources of the community with its needs. This process of self reliance and primary development of improvements at the community level has been extended to include disabled individuals, the Exceptional Adult. Federal Laws, 94-142, The Education of All Handicapped Children's Act, and the Vocational Rehabilitational Act, Public Law requires that, communities make provisions for educational service for handicapped individuals. The Florida Baker Act also requires decentralization of services and the provision of services in local communities.

Centralized services has historically been considered institutional services, a concept that includes isolation as well as benefits. Isolating individuals for extended periods in these facilities without making other provisions to link the local community, is the percieved problem. Making the determination as to which needs can be met by the local community, and which are better served by extended accommodation can become a complex problem.

A growing number of Exceptional Adults are concluding that special considerations exact a price in the loss of human dignity. Outspoken groups of disabled adults have attacked institutions for what they perceive as ridgity in parternalistic policies and denial of meaningful opportunities for consumer input. Preparing individuals to the maximum extent so that they can make decisions and assume the responsibilities of an adult, has been the primary object of public education.

The exceptional individual that is being served exclusively by centralized services can learn to function only in a controlled environment. When the exceptional individual returns to the local community he finds it difficult

to function where accommodation to his special needs have not been established. It is for the local community to provide the needed accommodation for the exceptional individual in an integrated and systematic approach. Too frequently exceptional adults are left out of the process. The community fails to utilize the resources and contributions the exceptional adult possesses when accommodation and services are being planned.

It is the purpose of this handbook to show how to integrate the needs and services designed for the handicapped to include the individual in the planning process through the Advisory Council. These councils can serve as resource and recommendation bodies.

EXCEPTIONAL ADULT COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

I. Introduction

A. Definition of Community Education.

1. Laws requiring accommodation for handicapped citizens.

2. Integration of the handicapped into the local community by making all services accessible.

B. Centralized services--isolation and benefits.

1. Centralizing services by handicap brings together all the services for which they might be eligible.

2. Isolates the person from the community.

3. Major problem--linking individuals to local community after isolation in institution.

C. Exceptional adults feel that organized institutions exact too high a price.

1. Treatment in institutions is inherently unequal.

a) paternalistic policy.

b) denial of meaningful opportunities for consumer input.

c) controlled environment does not fully prepare them for community life.

2. Exceptional individuals return to local community, he can not function where accommodation to his special needs have not been established.

D. The community fails to use the exceptional adult when services are being planned.

E. The purpose of handbook is to show how to integrate the exceptional adult into Advisory Council positions.

II. Determining the functions of an Exceptional Adult Advisory Committee.

A. Definition of an Advisory Council.

1. A group of individuals brought together for a purpose.

a) to advise or make recommendations.

b) examples--school boards, board of director to particular service agencies, board of county commissioners, government officials.

2. Must establish receptive attitude towards Advisory Council.

a) show the need and how it is not being met.

b) show the federal or state law that may require it.

B. When an Advisory Council is required.

1. They are program specific.

2. May be required by your grant.

3. Community or citizen requested--may be as a result of frustration.

4. Advisory Council may be formed to act as a buffer between an unpopular decision and the community.

C. Selecting a function for an Advisory Board.

1. Act as a liaison between the policy making body and the Exceptional Adults of the community.

2. Make recommendations and help obtain public support for these recommendations.

3. Keep the policy making bodies informed on barriers and situations faced by members of Exceptional Adult in the community.

4. Can provide information on additional or potential resources which could be utilized.

5. Can be a coordination center to eliminate duplication of efforts and service.

III. Selecting Advisory Council Members.

A. Does your Advisory Council reflect the diversity present in your program?

1. Age, Race, Sex, Geography
2. Handicap

B. Determine size of Advisory Council (13-18)

1. One-third should come from the community agencies that serve the handicapped.
2. One-third should be Exceptional Adults--handicap related to the goal.
3. One-third should be volunteers from the community--law and professional people.

C. How to foster cohesion in the group.

1. Require interaction--clearly stated policy and procedures will facilitate interaction between members of the Advisory Council.
2. Common Values and Goals--Council members share the beliefs and goals of integration of the Exceptional Adult into the community--group cohesion will increase.
3. Superodinate goal--clear, obtainable, primary objective recognized by all the members.
4. Success in achieving goals--the more effective your Advisory Council becomes the more prestige and influence the group will have.
5. Low external interactions--regular meeting, have agenda set, progress reports, sub-committee's reports.
6. Resolve differences--to increase member cohesion settle any differences of opinions early and in a way satisfactory to all.

IV. Length of service to the Advisory Council.

A. Term of commitment.

1. One year term.

2. Two year term.

3. Three year term.

4. Longer, or indfinate terms.

B. Attendance policy

1. Excused absence.

2. Unexcused absence.

V. Orientation and training of Advisory Council Members.

A. Orientation as to the goal or purpose of Advisory Council.

B. Train the members of the Advisory Council so that they can carry out the function of the council.

1. Workshops.

2. Access to documents, people.

3. Information on current programs and services.

C. Allow for flexability in accomplishing the goal.

1. Be aware of time pressure and it's role on group performance and objective attainment.

2. Use task groups or sub-committies as a means of getting information to groups.

a) volunteers from council to give special reports.

b) assigned by leader of group to members.

VI. Actual Running of Advisory Council meeting.

A. The decision making process.

1. Democratic or by group consensus.

a) leads to a high-level of group commitment.

b) opens the council to differences of opinion and cources of action.

VI. (Con't)

2. Autocratically--by one or a few.

a) responsibility is taken by a few.

b) decisions are made by those who possess the expertise.

B. Choosing the chairperson.

1. Process by which it should be done.

a) election

b) appointment

c) volunteer

2. Contingencies: factors involved in determining appropriate leadership choices.

a) Time available to the council.

b) past experience--proven leadership ability.

c) good communications skills, oral and written.

d) good interpersonal skills.

3) well organized.

C. Structure of committee members.

1. Determination of officers.

a) chairman and or co-chairman.

b) secretary

2. Sub-committees are needed-when and how organized.

D. Setting the agenda--usually done by chairman.

VII. Accommodating needs for disabled members.

A. Removing architectural barriers for mobility impaired.

B. Removing communications barriers for sensory impaired.

C. Removing barriers for speaking impaired.

D. Removing barriers for the retarded.

E. Removing barriers for the emotionally impaired.

VIII. Recognition of the committees efforts and contribution.

A. Personal need for reward--tangible or intangible.

B. Make provisions for community to show appreciation.

RECRUITING ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

What are the basic needs in establishing an E.A. Advisory Council which has Exceptional Adults as members? There is the problem of identifying, or locating disabled individuals in your Community. An excellent directory is the Guide to Programs Serving Developemental Disabilities, which is available free, upon request. Additionally, consumer groups and other service agencies serving exceptionalities, may be able to assist in locating disabled individuals. Sending letters, or proclaiming your desire through local news media to involve Exceptional Adults in the process of identifying needs, and resources is another excellent vehicle.

Contacting individuals is not the insurmountable problem which some would have you believe. Letters in print can be forwarded to other agency clients without any breech of confidentiality. Those which are interested, can contact you. This will be easier if a self addressed return envelope is enclosed, and telephone numbers listed. The blind usually have someone which reads their print mail to them. A few have a machine, Optocan, which places the form of print letters onto a tactile display. The Deaf may have a Telephone Teletype device, T.T.Y. A unit on your end is needed to receive calls transmitted by one of these machines; therefore two units are needed, to communicate in this manner.

ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS TO ADVISORY COUNCIL PARTICIPATION

People in wheelchairs often relate that friends have recommended places to them, and when they got there, two or three steps, or some narrow doorway which the friend had not noticed impeded their way. The friend not being in a wheelchair had not noticed these features which for them had presented no barrier. When facilitating the participation of Exceptional Adults in Advisory Councils, we need to learn to be aware of architectual features which present barriers for those which we wish to participate. Minimum standards for architectural standards have been established, and are available free upon request from the Office of Civil Rights, Technical Assistance Section, Atlanta, Georgia.

HOW SHOULD ADVISORY COUNCILS ADVISE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES?

1. They should understand the difference between a "want", and a "need".
2. They will understand the purpose of the Council if written statement of their function has been provided.
3. Their findings should be the result of a thorough examination of relevent data, guidelines, and policies governing the question under scrutiny.
4. Investigations should be made by small groups, subcommittees, five individuals whose findings are reported back to the full council for review, and recommendation.
5. Recommendations will be enhanced when they are accompanied by references to relevent data, and include a plan of action with cost estimates.
6. The recommendations of the Council should be serously considered when recommendations are rejected. The decision making authority would provide the Advisory Council with appropriate rationale when rejection occurs.

EXCEPTIONAL ADULT MEETINGS

I. Chairperson and Executive Board set agenda

1. Define goals and objectives.
2. Determine who should attend. What area of exceptionality and view points should be represented.
3. Estimate time for each agenda item (all necessary resources, no unnecessary resources). Be sure to include provision time for braillers, translators, etc.
4. Ensure group knows what is expected.
5. Less important items should be placed last on the agenda.
6. Maximum meeting length should not exceed one hour.

II. Advanced meeting requirements

1. Provide adequate notice of meeting time and dates keeping in mind the disabilities represented.
2. Mail out agenda in a communicable form to members.
3. Provide support material for agenda items.
4. Contact selected attendees beforehand to cultivate preparedness, interest, and so on. On major issues, it is useful to talk to everyone ahead of time, to anticipate clashes, avoid hopeless battles.

III. Facilities providing total "access" must be utilized.

1. Furniture and space.
2. Equipment-Brailler, etc.
3. Location-as close to participants as possible.
4. Refreshments.

IV. Conducting the Meeting (chairperson)

1. Start on time.
2. Set stage: review purpose, introduce new members, and the like.

IV. (con't)

3. Exercise control.

a) Follow agenda.

b) Prevent one or two from hogging "air time".

c) Manage time (seek decision when appropriate, move on to next item).

d) Cut off side conversations.

e) Appoint someone to take notes.

f) Define issues.

g) Ask many questions.

4. Manage process.

a) Ensure everyone gets a chance to speak.

b) Stop interruptions.

c) Include breaks

d) Clarify misunderstandings.

e) Don't take silence as agreement; do not force early concensus.

f) Stop to find out why discussion is not going well when that occurs.

g) Summarize.

5. Speak more to group than to individuals.

6. Finish on time.

V. Participating in meeting (members).

1. Prepare self for meeting (read hand-outs, and so on).

2. If can't attend, inform chairperson.

3. Be on time.

4. Exercise self-discipline (stick to topic, do not interrupt).

5. Pratice "active listening."

6. Contribute to managing the meeting process.

7. Carry out, subsequently, responsibilities assigned.

VI. Concluding the meeting.

1. Summarize decisions reached.
2. Review responsibility assignments and clarify next steps (who, to do what).
3. Take time to assess the meeting's process, if necessary.
4. Schedule next meeting.

VII. Follow up.

1. Prepare and distribute notes.
2. Follow-up on carring out of assignments.

BYLAWS OF THE CLAY COUNTY ADVISORY COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES

Abbreivated CCACD

Article I -- Name

The name of this organization shall be the Clay County Advisory Council on Disabilities (CCACD).

Article II -- Purpose

The purpose of the CCACD is to strive for the betterment of our total community:

A. Through a County wide organizatiion of individuals which have demonstrated initiative in the expansion of opportunity for the disabled to participate in the communities activities.

B. By providing a forum for the views of the disabled of Clay County.

C. To insure accessable and appropriate services are available in accordance with the standards provided in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

D. To insure accessability for disabled individuals in public places in accordance with the standards of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

E. Provide on going needs assessment of the disabled of Clay County.

Article III

Representation and Membership

We are the human resources of Clay County: individually, and in groups we are concerned with developing a quality of opportunity in education, recreation, political, and commercial activities for all residents of the county. Of special concern are those which are disabled, and are currently experiencing barriers to their participation in the communities activities. We represent approximately ten percent of the population of the county and are interested in the well being of the community as it effects all. Six broadly representive organizations re-

Presenting various aspects of human concern and service shall select a representative for the board of directors. Each of these six members shall select, and serve as sponsor for three members to the CCACD. Sponsors shall either select from those eligible, select a qualified volunteer, or appoint qualified representatives for a provider representative, consumer representative, and a public representative. All individuals which are willing and able to serve which have been chosen by an election process shall be seated. Community education reserves the right to accept, or reject other recommendations based on their qualifications. To qualify as a member a person must be a resident of Clay County, over eighteen years of age, and has demonstrated initiative in the expansion of opportunities for the disabled to participate in the communities activities. Membership will be restricted to not less than thirteen, and not more than eighteen members. At least a mathmatical one-third of the members shall be qualified individuals which are disabled. The denfinition of "handicapped person" provided in the HEW final regulations or section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act shall be employed.

Article IV -- Selection Procedure

The Clay County Center for Community Education shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member, and shall facilitate the CCACD.

A. Broadly based groups representing a cross section of human concern, and endeavor shall be contacted by the facilitator, and requested to select a representative for the board of directors.

B. Members of the board of directors shall be appointed for two year terms of service by the CCCCE based on their qualifications, and the board need for representatives which could reflect the geographic, gender, racial, economic, and other deversities present in the county.

C. All appointed members of the board of directors shall select three members to the CCACD as perscribed in Article III.

Article IV (con't)

D. A provider prepresentative shall be employed, or have been employed during the past five years in an occupation representative of the sponsor. A consumer representative must be an individual which has requested services from the sponsoring organization. A public representative can be any otherwise qualified individual. At least one of the three representatives selected by the sponsor must be a qualified disabled individual.

E. Sponsors may select representatives by any method, with elections refered, individuals to recommend for appointment.

F. Final appointment shall be initially made by the CCCCE, until such time as five members of the board of directors have been appointed, and thereafter the board shall assume this responsibility.

G. Appointments to the board of directors or as a member of the CCACD shall require a two-thirds vote of the board of directors.

Article V -- Tenure

A. Members will serve on the CCACD, and the board of directors for a two year term. One year appointments will be made during the first year to develope a rotation of 50% of the membership annually.

B. Members unable to complete their terms will be replaced for the remaining portion of the term.

C. No member shall serve consecutive terms, nor complete the unexpired term of a replaced member without at least six months interruption of service.

Article VI -- Meetings

Regular monthly meetings of the CCACD shall be held in Clay County on the second Wednesday of each month, 12:00-1:30 p.m. at a site which is accessable to the disabled.

Article VII -- Officers

A. No sponsor may have more than one of their representatives serve as an officer of the CCACD.

Article VII (con't)

B. Council officers, chairman, vice-chairman, recording secretary, membership chairman shall be elected for two year terms by the members.

C. Installation of the newly elected officers will take place on the first meeting of the new year.

D. In the event that the chairman should be unable to complete his term of service the vice-chairman shall assume this responsibility.

E. All other official vacancies will be filled by appointment of the chairman and requires a two-third vote of the council for approval.

Article VIII -- Duties of Officers

A. The responsibility of the chairman shall be:

1. Preside at all regular monthly meetings.
2. Appoint a chairman for all standing and adhoc committees.
3. To monitor the progress of all committees.
4. With the recording secretary attest the approved minutes.

B. The vice-chairman shall:

1. Assume the responsibility of the chairman in his absence.
2. Initiate and respond to correspondence as may be required.
3. Be responsible for the orderlyness of the meeting site.

C. Recording Secretary shall:

1. Record the minutes of all monthly meetings.
2. Provide to all board of directors a summary of all official actions taken by providing them with copies of the minutes.

D. The membership chairman shall:

1. Take attendance at all meetings and place in the official minutes.
2. Grant excused absences to members who can not attend for a good cause.
3. Inform the board of directors when a vacancy occurs.

Article VIII (con't)

4. Recommend to the board of directors replacement of any member which has compiled three unexcused, four excused, or any combination of five absences during their two year terms.

Article IX -- Committees

The chairman of the council shall appoint a chairman for all standing, and adhoc committees subject to the majority vote of the council. Each committee chairman shall select individuals to assist, which can be drawn for any of the human resources available in Clay County.

A. A nominating committee shall be established for the election of officers with one representative of each sponsor.

B. No committee except the nominating committee shall have over five members on the council.

Article X -- Board of Directors

The board of directors shall meet at least twice annually. The meeting of the board of directors will be called by the chairman, or membership chairman by providing at least two weeks prior notice.

Article XI -- Amendments

A. Proposed amendments to the by-laws should appear as an agenda item.

B. A two-thirds vote of the membership shall be required for amending the by-laws.

IDEA COUNCIL SYSTEM MODEL

Jay J. Alligood,
Director, Clay County Center for Community Education

The concept of exceptional adult education in the public school sector is relatively new. The impace of Publice Law 94-142 providing federal funds for individuals ages 18-21, Special Demonstration and Teacher Training Grants and Adult Basic Education Grants under the Adult Education Act and State funding in states such as Florida has prompted an expansion of the number of public school exceptional adults. Public school educators who may increasingly preceive a national and community level mission to provide more educational opportunities may impinge on other social service agencies organizations who perceive a similar mission. In Florida, for example, there is a commitment to deinstitutionalize handicapped individuals. Group home advocates want an accelerated deinstitutionalization process placing these individuals in group homes whereas day centers propose a different philosophy. Added to this potential delemma is the public school educator who must determine his role. Does he offer his own day program or provide assistance to existing group homes or day centers.

(DISTRICT CONFIGURATION)

This configuration depicts the Human Resource Concil, the Supra system, with its 5 major subsystem conponents: Health and Rehabilitative Services, Church, School Board, Transportation and Social/Civic Organizations. The coreof the System is the individual. Arrows indicate 2-way communication patter with positive/negative valence representing appropriatness of response. The principles of equifinality and synergy dominate the configuration pattern of action.

One logical response to this problem would be for public educators to assist with "educational" problems and for social service agencies/organizations to assist with "services." Distinguishing between "education" and "service" with regard to handicapped individuals, however, is a very difficult task. Is educable mentally handicapped instruction in computation (making change) an appropriate activity for public shcool education or an association for retarded citizens. Is improving muscular coordination so that a physically handicapped individual may hold his head erect to read a public school education function or a state vocational rehabilitation agency function. If one believes that these questions are easily answered, he need only examine existing K-12 special education programs which provide both education and service. If this same philosophy is applied to adults the potential for organizational duplication and conflict is far greater because of the large number of agencies/organizations currently serving the needs of exceptional adults.

This potential conflict may be avoided if public school educators, exceptional adults and agencies/organizations develop an effective communication linkage system. One approach is the IDEA Council Language System model. As the acronym "IDEA" might suggest, a typical district or municipal configuration must emphasize the generation of ideas to resolve problems in the realm of linkage patterns and provision of education and services to exceptional adults. Existing approaches and structures or a recombination of these elements will not be enough to address the problem. Mary Parker Follet's concept of "integration," a "new" resolution to the problem must be utilized.

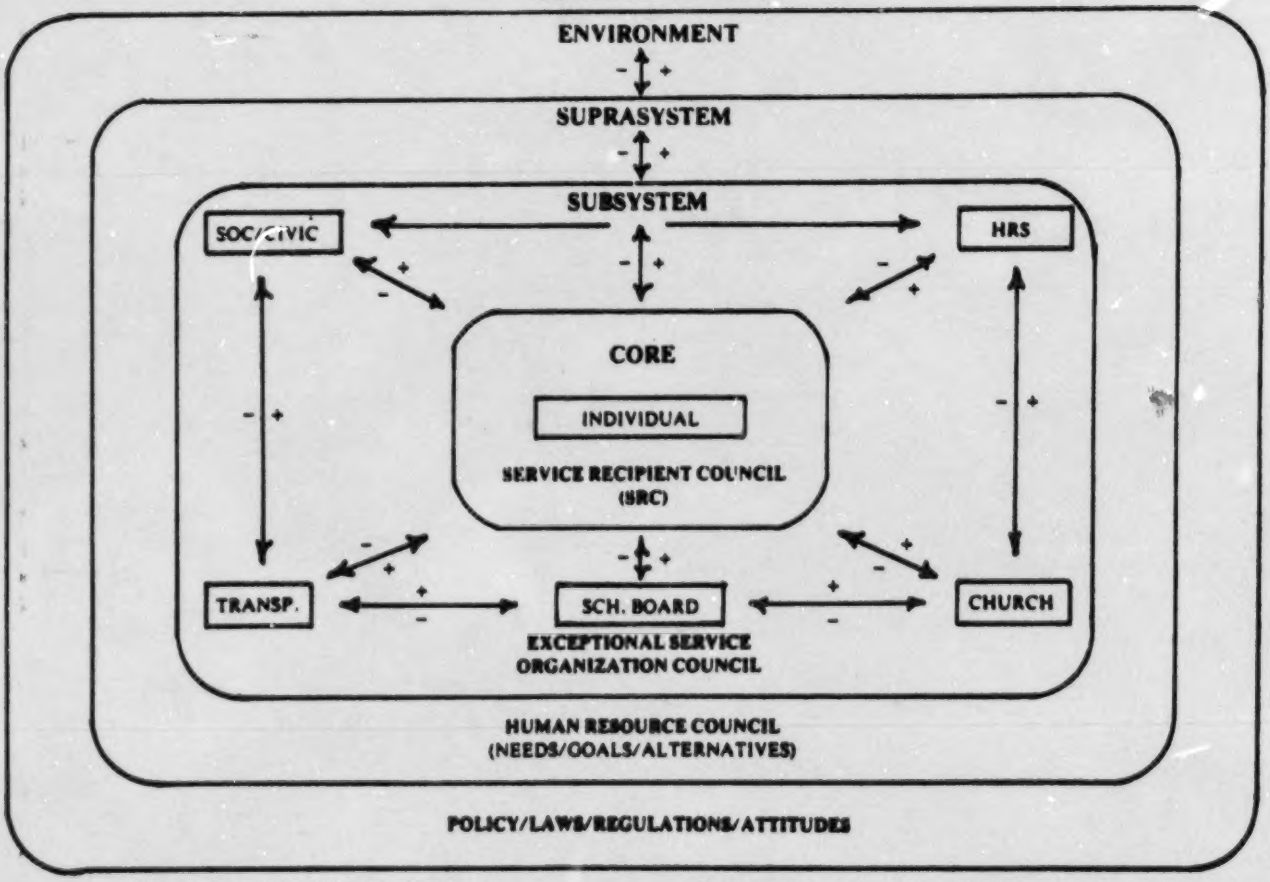
The model depicts the key participants who will provide these new solutions. At the core of the system is the individual, the exceptional adult, who is the recipient of services. His needs are expressed through a Service Recipient Council (SRC). The Human Resource Council (HRC) must

select individuals who represent a diversity of age, race, sex, creed, national orgin and handicap. More importantly, however, individuals who are selected must be "advocates." They must express a strong desire and willingness to represent the needs and views of exceptional adults. Subsystem participants include those agencies/organizations who would be most likely to serve exceptional adults in a typical district: health and rehabilitative service (HRS) agencies, church organizations, school board, transportation board, and social/civic organizations. These agencies comprise the Exceptional Service Organization Council (ESOC). At the suprasystem level, Human Resource Council (HRC) members are the participants who represent all agencies/organizations addressing human needs.

The model also reflects direct communication, fact to face discussion by participants. The positive/minus valences surrounding the communication flow between the SRC and Subsystem district providers symbolizes a very open form of communication in which needs and recommendations are considered. The same process characterizes subsystem-suprasystem and suprasystem-environmental relationships.

The IDEA System can thus generate four very beneficial results: (a) duplication of programs will be avoided utilizing the "who can do it best" approach, (b) shared use of facilities, transportation and personnel will reduce costs and maximize service delivery, (c) new needs or modification of existing programs can be addressed in an integrated approach involving client, agency and community and (d) national, state and local regulations/policies and attitudes be changed because of the increased focus of power.

IDEA COUNCIL SYSTEM MODEL (INDIVIDUAL-DISTRICT EXCEPTIONAL ADULT ADVISORY COUNCIL SYSTEM MODEL)



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CLAY COUNTY CENTER
FOR
COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Questionnaire For The
Blind and Visually Impaired Adult

NAME: _____ TELEPHONE NO. _____

ADDRESS: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

_____

1. Please place a check by the statement which reflects your preference.

   ____ I am interested and would like to participate in classes offered through the Clay County Center for Community Education.

   ____ I am not interested in taking classes at this time.

   ____ I would need transportation to attend courses which might be offered.

   ____ I could provide my own transportation to attend classes.

   I prefer classes: ____ Weekly ____ Bimonthly ____ Other

2. Please place a number in the space provided by the following class ideas which you prefer and the order of your preference. Number one should be placed by the class you would most like to have, two by your second choice, and so on to six.

   ____ I would like to be able to read and write for myself, and would attend a class offered for this purpose.

   ____ I would like to be able to add, subtract, multiply, and divide for myself, and would like a course on the Abacus for this purpose.

   ____ I would like to learn of the services which are available to me.

   ____ I would like to get around more independently and would be interested in learning mobility for this purpose.

____ I would like to make productive use of leisure time and would be interested in taking a class in arts and crafts for this purpose.

____ I would like an opportunity to meet other blind or visually impaired individuals and learn how they manage with their visual loss.

COMMENTS: